UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Thursday, April 30, 2026

And he got it! Feedback ==> Food

Blog readers will recall that it was only a short time ago that the food went away.* But now it's back!

From the Daily Bruin: *UCLA's Early Care and Education centers reversed a decision to discontinue meals, diapers and formula for children... The reinstatement of UCLA ECE's services came after Tashon McKeithan, ECE's executive director, announced April 16 that ECE would eliminate its food service program and stop providing diapers and formula starting July 1 to cut costs amid UCLA's budget deficit. The ECE centers provide child care for UCLA community members, including faculty, staff and students.*

The cuts to ECE's programs sparked concern among parents, leading them and their children to protest outside Chancellor Julio Frenk's residence Tuesday morning. The protesters – who held signs reading, "Little Bruins need snacks" – called on UCLA to provide more funding for ECE. UCLA ECE reinstated the services after receiving ***feedback from parents****...*

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/04/27/ucla-early-care-and-education-admin-announce-reinstated-food-formula-programs.

===

*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/04/food-for-thought.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Straws in the Wind - Part 328

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- FAQs for Senate Faculty about Possible Strike by UAW; Winter 2026
- Fight for the Future of Higher Education: Academic Freedom from the Classroom to the Clinic
- Our Concerns Over Revisions to APMs 15 and 16
- Fight for the Future of Higher Ed Town Hall
- Letter from AAUP to UC Objecting to Trellix

Remaking the University

- Liner Note 52. Fighting for an Interdiscipline: The Humanities' Future - 4/23/2026
- Liner Note 51. Academic Freedom of the Third Kind, in a Very Bad Time - 4/7/2026
- Liner Note 50. When Will UCOP Stop Hurting UC Campuses? - 3/24/2026

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Remaking the University
- Changing Universities
- California Professor

Search This Blog

Search

UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

From the Daily Pennsylvanian: *Penn is moving forward with budget reductions across all schools, centers, and administrative units as part of its planning for fiscal year 2027, according to [an] email sent to University faculty. Announced on April 21 by Provost John Jackson Jr. and Executive Vice President Mark Dingfield, the decision formalizes cross-cutting measures first introduced in January. The reductions — which may include staffing changes or modifications to programs and services — will vary across schools and units."All Schools, Centers, and central administrative units will be making reductions as part of a shared effort to meet this moment," they wrote in the email, citing rising institutional costs, federal policy changes, and broader economic uncertainty.*

According to Jackson and Dingfield, the reductions will be implemented as part of Penn's finalized FY27 budgets. They wrote that the cuts are intended to address "structural costs deliberately." ...The latest message highlighted how forthcoming policy changes, such as an increase in the endowment excise tax and to federal student loan program updates, contributed to the University's financial strain.

In 2025, Penn implemented several "proactive financial measures," including a hiring freeze and a review of capital spending. Faculty have since raised concerns that continued reductions could restrict research programs and departmental resources...

Full story at https://www.thedp.com/article/2026/04/penn-announces-budget-cuts-trump-federal-uncertainty-2026.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: U of Pennsylvania

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 154

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard Medical School faculty offered diverging assessments of the school's revised mission statement, with several professors welcoming a tighter focus on patient care and research while others said the rewrite stripped out language central to the practice of medicine. HMS dean George Q. Daley '82 unveiled the new statement on April 9, defending it as a "leaner" articulation of the school's purpose. The previous version opened with a pledge to "nurture a diverse, inclusive community dedicated to alleviating suffering."*

Topics

politics (2480) UC (2150) UC Regents (1912) health care (1448) State Budget (1282) governor (1133) diversity (1022) UC budget crisis (977) UC-Berkeley (926) pension (664) pensions (594) admissions (562) athletics (552) tuition (536) CSU (424) transportation (403) UC-Davis (379) online education (340) UCOP (317) uc retirement (311) traffic (306) ucrp (301) audio (291) UC enrollment (284) new hotel-conference center (282) UC-San Diego (268) enrollment (263) community colleges (251) LAO (236) UC-Irvine (186) fund raising (174) UC-Santa Barbara (163) UC-San Francisco (161) UC-Santa Cruz (159) controller (152) faculty center (144) UC-Riverside (143) ballot propositions (132) CalPERS (122) UC-Merced (118) Master Plan (111) faculty pay (109) Yudof (90) UCRS retirement (62) Faculty Association at UCLA (61) parking (61) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) copyright (36) UC Berkeley (35) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (22) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) Regents (15) State Contribution (14) UCOF (14) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UCpolitics (4) UC Irvine (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Santa Cruz (2)

Blog Archive

▼ 2026 (440)
▼ April (110)
And he got it! Feedback ==> Food
Straws in the Wind - Part 328
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 154
So they won't be what they're cracked up to be?
Straws in the Wind - Part 327
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge - Part 153
I'll just give you the links: Not an Endorsement -...
Food for Thought
Straws in the Wind - Part 326
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 152
News: Possible Mid-May UC Strike - Part 2
He won't be there
Straws in the Wind - Part 325
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 151

The revised statement removes that language and centers the school's work on improving "health and wellbeing," with the diversity commitment relocated to a separate community values statement that affirms HMS as "a diverse and inclusive community."

Several faculty members said the revision was an improvement... HMS professors Hao Wu and Joseph P. Newhouse offered similar assessments. Wu wrote that the previous statement "sounded a bit sad," while Newhouse called the revision "appropriate." ... Other faculty were sharply critical... David S. Jones, a professor of the culture of medicine at HMS... questioned whether political pressure had driven the revision... Christophe O. Benoist, a professor of immunohematology, said he understood the criticism but saw the changes as a strategic concession... Stephen Lory, a retired microbiology professor, said the revisions would not change the day-to-day work of the school's labs...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/27/hms-mission-faculty-reactions/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Harvard, health care, politics

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

So they won't be what they're cracked up to be?

From the Daily Bruin: *Long-awaited sidewalk repairs are coming to Westwood this year, according to documents from the Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering. The city will repair sidewalks in areas in Westwood, including parts of Veteran Avenue, Levering Avenue, Landfair Avenue and Gayley Avenue, according to a pending request document from the bureau.*

The design period for the repairs ended in April after beginning in October 2025. Construction will last from October 2026 to October 2027, according to the repair program package...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/04/23/westwood-sidewalk-repairs-will-start-this-year-city-says.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: transportation, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 327

From the Columbia Daily Spectator: *Amid a national reckoning with grade inflation, Columbia's undergraduate schools have been considering changing the way the University weighs A-pluses. It is unclear when these changes would take effect if approved. The Committee on Instruction, which governs the curriculum for Columbia College and the School of General*

Exchange of Letters
Straws in the Wind - Part 324
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 150
The Regents are Coming to UCLA May 5-6, 2026 (Tues...
Panunzio Awards
Straws in the Wind - Part 323
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 149
The deadline that wasn't
Caution Advised
Straws in the Wind - Part 322
Milliken-Gillman-Chermerinsky on Free Speech and A...
PR Plus for UCLA's Use of VA Stadium
Another 405 closure this weekend
Straws in the Wind - Part 321
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 148
News: Possible Mid-May UC Strike
Straws in the Wind - Part 320
Already Ahead
Want to subscribe to this blog?
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 147
Harvard's Budget Leak
Straws in the Wind - Part 319
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 146
The Incompleteness Theorem
Straws in the Wind - Part 318
Another Closed-Door Regents Meeting Today
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 145
Celebrating Bond
UCLA History - Warren
Straws in the Wind - Part 317
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 144
AI's Indirect Threat to the Wayback Machine
Straws in the Wind - Part 316
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 143
What Milliken said about AI, Trump administration,...
Getting In - Part 7
Straws in the Wind - Part 315
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 142
Regents Behind Closed Doors Today...
Still Pouring In
Straws in the Wind - Part 314
Wikipedia Solicitations - Part 3 (flood)
Talking Back

Studies, has considered decreasing the weight of A-pluses for at least the past year, three COI members told Spectator. While the registrar currently weighs A-pluses as a 4.33 in its cumulative grade point average calculation, the COI proposed weighing A-pluses as a 4.0—the same as an A. Under this proposal, individual professors could still award A-pluses, which would continue to appear on students' transcripts.

The proposal comes as peer institutions consider drastic efforts to curb grade inflation. This fall, a report issued by Harvard University found that over 60 percent of grades awarded to Harvard undergraduates were A's. Harvard proposed capping the proportion of A's awarded for each class at 20 percent, though it delayed voting for the proposal until fall 2027...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/04/21/columbia-proposes-reducing-weight-of-a-pluses-amid-national-reckoning-with-grade-inflation/.

As we have noted in the past, the problem with grade inflation - unlike price inflation - is that grade inflation is capped. With a cap, everyone ends up with the same grade. Lowering the cap as a "solution" is, quite frankly, a ridiculous idea. But *de facto*, that's what the proposal above amounts to.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Columbia, Harvard

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge - Part 153

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard deliveries have been disrupted... as graduate student workers picket loading docks across campus — at times prompting drivers to turn away rather than cross the line. Some delivery drivers declined to complete drop-offs after speaking with picketers, while others attempted to reroute shipments through alternate routes. According to Evan R. Lemire, a HGSU executive board member, drivers from companies including UPS, USPS, Airgas, Taylor Oil, and Arrow Paper Corporation have been unable to access multiple docking sites in Cambridge since the strike began.*

A UPS driver said packages scheduled for the Harvard Yard Mail Center at 1 Oxford St. were not delivered Wednesday because drivers were unwilling to cross the picket line. Instead, the packages are expected to be retrieved from a UPS facility by Harvard Transportation Services staff. UPS drivers are represented by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, whose contracts allow workers to honor picket lines...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/24/delivery-delay-hgsu-strike/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, strikes

I'll just give you the links: Not an Endorsement - Just FYI

Straws in the Wind - Part 313
Heaps Again
Getting In - Part 6
Straws in the Wind - Part 312
Another One
Agostini's Every Ship on Its Own Bottom - Part 2
Straws in the Wind - Part 311
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 141
Disappeared - Part 3
Straws in the Wind - Part 310
More Conversations - Part 2
What Milliken said about AI, Trump administration,...
Straws in the Wind - Part 309
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 140
Coming April 24th - Part 2
Just a Reminder
Straws in the Wind - Part 308
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 139
AFSCME Conflict of Interest Bill in the Hopper
Straws in the Wind - Part 307
If only we could cut out the academics...
Getting In - Part 5
Straws in the Wind - Part 306
UC Retirement Online Programs
Donation
Assembly
Straws in the Wind - Part 305
The Road to UCLA Seems to Run Through UCLA's Geffe...
Don't Click!
Agostini's Every Ship on Its Own Bottom
Straws in the Wind - Part 304
More Subway Construction This Month
Closed Door (but a guess)
The Way We Live Now
Straws in the Wind - Part 303
Banned
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 138
More Conversations
Straws in the Wind - Part 302
The (First Quarter) Alternative Way
Getting In - Part 4
Straws in the Wind - Part 301
Wikipedia Solicitations - Part 2

► March (111)
► February (106)
► January (113)

https://www.dailycal.org/news/state/uc-berkeley-professor-satish-rao-enters-california-gubernatorial-race/article_11e5028f-5c3a-44ab-a874-9d154c0b2044.html#disqus_thread

https://satish4guv.org/

https://satish4guv.org/course/lecture1

https://x.com/SatishForGuv

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC-Berkeley

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

Food for Thought

From the Daily Bruin: *UCLA's Early Care and Education centers will raise tuition, pause hiring for vacant positions and stop providing food for children in response to university-wide budget cuts, its executive director announced to families [last] Thursday. UCLA ECE will discontinue financial support for formula and diapers, and it will not backfill vacant staff positions starting July 1, UCLA ECE's Executive Director Tashon McKeithan said in a Thursday email to parents. McKeithan said in the email that UCLA ECE – which provides child care to UCLA students, faculty and staff – will increase tuition across all age groups, including infant, toddler and preschool levels, by 4% for the 2026-27 academic year.*

Tuition for infants and toddlers will cost around $3,300 and $3,000, respectively, for UCLA affiliates, McKeithan said in the email. Monthly tuition for infants will cost around $3,800 for non-UCLA affiliates, and tuition for toddlers will cost around $3,200, she added. Campus

► 2025 (1139)
► 2024 (832)
► 2023 (828)
► 2022 (719)
► 2021 (710)
► 2020 (914)
► 2019 (671)
► 2018 (595)
► 2017 (666)
► 2016 (715)
► 2015 (765)
► 2014 (704)
► 2013 (776)
► 2012 (839)
► 2011 (738)
► 2010 (431)
► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

administrators asked all university departments to reduce costs in response to UCLA's ongoing budget deficit, McKeithan said in the email...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/04/21/ucla-child-care-centers-cut-food-for-children-raise-tuition-amid-budget-deficit.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 326

From the Brown Daily Herald: *Economics Professor Roberto Serrano normally holds in-person exams for his ECON 1170: "Welfare Economics and Social Choice Theory" class, but this semester he decided to assign a take-home, closed-book exam for the first midterm to alleviate pressure for students after the Dec. 13 shooting. But after the class's grade distributions indicated widespread cheating, Serrano has decided to return to in-person exams for all of his courses. The median for the exam was 98%, with 40 out of 86 students scoring 100%. Compared to previous data, the distribution for his first ECON 1170 midterm was "absolutely ridiculous," especially since he had designed a more challenging exam for the take-home format, Serrano said in an interview with The Herald. "Historically, the average grade in the midterm exams ranged from 65 to 85," Serrano said. After investigating the exam results, Serrano said he found signs of AI use and collaboration amongst students...*

Pakzad-Hurson also suspects student AI use on homework assignments. "The biggest shift is just that students are seemingly a lot better at homework now," Pakzad-Hurson said. He has noticed "perfect performance" on homeworks and "poor performance" on tests. Pakzad-Hurson lowered the weight of homeworks on students' overall grades to reduce the incentive to submit AI work.

Economics Professor Rajiv Vohra noted that AI does not appear to be a problem with in-person exams, but may be an issue with homeworks or take-home exams. Teaching Professor of Economics Sylvia Kuo has also noticed potential AI usage on her homework assignments, even though they are graded based on effort. She said she has seen "weird answers" that still arrive at a solution, but use terminology that is inconsistent "with what was taught."

In the last year, Kuo has also seen a decrease in exam scores, despite the fact that the content of exams has been "roughly" the same since she started teaching the course more than a decade ago. She said this suggests students are not using their "own brain" to do the "learning in order to perform well on exams." ...

Full story at https://www.browndailyherald.com/article/2026/04/after-ai-cheating-concerns-economics-professors-see-in-person-exams-as-a-path-forward.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Brown University

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 152

From the Harvard Crimson: *Leaders of Harvard's non-tenure-track faculty union quietly called off plans for a spring strike, overriding a membership vote after concluding the walkout risked failing to win approval from the United Auto Workers. At a... general membership meeting attended by roughly 150, workers represented by the Harvard Academic Workers-UAW voted to close an ongoing strike authorization vote on Friday and begin striking as early as next week, according to an attendee. But in an abrupt about-face, the union's bargaining committee extended the voting timeline the following day — a move that rules out any strike this semester.*

...The committee said the combination of low participation and a tight turnaround between the proposed vote closure and strike date created a "substantial" risk that UAW's international leadership would not authorize its strike in time. Without that approval, workers would be ineligible for strike pay and other union support — and the authorization process would have to start over.

...The move strips HAW-UAW of a key source of leverage this semester as negotiations for its first contract with Harvard stretch into a second year. It also means that the non-tenure-track faculty will not picket alongside Harvard's graduate student union, which previously began striking...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/24/haw-strike-vote-override/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, strikes

Monday, April 27, 2026

News: Possible Mid-May UC Strike - Part 2

UC continues its policy of publicizing its latest offer in union negotiations. As the May 14 threatened deadline of the AFSCME strike approaches, UC has upped its offer and put out a news release. Excerpt:

Demonstrating its commitment to delivering proposals to address affordability concerns for employees, the University of California has expanded its contract offer to AFSCME-represented patient care and service workers, delivering even stronger wage growth, new financial protections, and meaningful improvements to working conditions.

Building on its earlier proposal, UC's latest package, an increase of more than $12 million over the previous offer, now delivers up to nearly 33% total pay growth over the life of the contract when annual raises and step increases are combined. In addition to the 5% wage increase already provided to AFSCME-represented team members in 2025, UC's offer includes across-the-board raises of 5% in 2026, 4% in 2027, 4% in 2028 (up from 3.5%), and 3% in 2029, alongside step increases each year of the contract to support steady wage progression.

The updated offer also includes up to a $1,000 ratification bonus for eligible employees, paid within 90 days, providing immediate financial support...

Full release at https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-expands-afscme-offer-address-affordability-nearly-33-pay-growth-and-lower-health.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:35 AM No comments:

Labels: strikes, UC

He won't be there

At the upcoming May meetings of the Regents, one Regent won't be there. From the Daily Cal:

When Gov. Gavin Newsom appointed four new UC regents last month, the public statement overshadowed the quiet departure of a veteran of the body, Gareth Elliott, who left his post without announcement 11 years before the end of his term. A partner at the California lobbying firm Sacramento Advocates, Elliot served on the Board for over a decade prior to his departure and was reappointed by Newsom in 2025 to a new 12-year term.

Elliott's exit from the board, however, was not a traditional resignation or termination. Rather, the regent left through a relatively rare procedural mechanism after just one year. Regents may assume their positions immediately upon the governor's appointment, and an appointment is valid only if confirmed by the State Senate within a year. As he was reappointed by Newsom on Feb. 27, 2025, Elliott's new term was never confirmed in this process, forcing him out of his seat last March.

According to UC Office of the President spokesperson Rachel Zaentz, Elliott "chose not to pursue confirmation for personal reasons." Elliott did not respond to a request for comment...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/uc-regent-quietly-exits-board-11-years-before-end-of-appointment/article_53c5d1cf-93db-4125-9821-22524cdb704d.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UC Regents

Straws in the Wind - Part 325

From the Columbia Daily Spectator: *In her student advising meetings in recent years, Wendy Schor-Haim, director of Barnard's First-Year Writing program, has noticed a shift in her advisees. Schor-Haim, who has taught in the program since 2009, said she saw a "notable decrease" over the past few years in first-year students voicing interest in humanities majors. Instead, more were arriving on campus with clear plans to pursue STEM fields.*

Schor-Haim's experience reflects a broader trend faculty say is emerging at Barnard: declining interest in traditional humanities majors alongside sustained growth in hard and social sciences. As Barnard continues to invest in scientific infrastructure and resources, professors across

disciplines are wondering what this shift means for the college's identity and the future of humanities in a liberal arts framework...

In her advising conversations, Schor-Haim said interests are skewing "overwhelmingly" toward natural sciences. Social sciences, particularly economics, follow. By contrast, she said she could "count on one hand" how many of her students enter Barnard expressing interest in fields such as literature, history, philosophy, or other humanities...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/04/19/as-barnard-advances-stem-initiatives-humanities-professors-express-enrollment-concerns/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Barnard

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 151

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard College Dean David J. Deming said [last] Thursday that he would cut administrative functions before scaling back student-facing programming as the College braces for significant reductions tied to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' $365 million structural deficit...*

Deming pointed to the federal endowment tax — raised to eight percent last summer under the Republicans' tax and spending bill — as a major driver of the FAS' budget shortfall. "That blew a hole of roughly $100 million per year in the FAS budget," Deming said. "That's not a one-time thing. That's an every year thing that is enshrined into legislation." ...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/24/deming-administrative-functions-budget/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, politics

Sunday, April 26, 2026

Exchange of Letters

Undergraduate Students Associated Council
University of California, Los Angeles

Letter Condemning Event with Omer Shem Tov

To: The UCLA Administration, Hillel at UCLA, UCLA Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies, and Affiliated Campus Stakeholders

The Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC) condemns the event organized by Hillel at UCLA and co-sponsored by the UCLA Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies, featuring Omer Shem Tov.

While we affirm the humanity of all people impacted by violence, we reject the selective platforming of narratives that obscure the broader reality of ongoing state violence. Israel is currently continuing to carry out what has been widely identified by human rights advocates as a genocide in Gaza, while also expanding its illegal military campaign into Lebanon. In this context, elevating a single narrative, absent of critical political and humanitarian framing, serves to legitimize and normalize these ongoing atrocities.

Institutional sponsorship of this event reflects a troubling disregard for Palestinian life and contributes to a campus climate in which Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students are further marginalized, silenced, and harmed. Universities must not be complicit in the production or amplification of one-sided narratives that erase systems of oppression and occupation. USAC has, and continues to stand in unwavering solidarity with Palestinian students and all those impacted by state violence and displacement.

USAC calls on UCLA to immediately reconsider its role in sponsoring future programming that advances incomplete and harmful representations of ongoing violence.

Sincerely,
The Undergraduate Student's Association Council

Hillel at UCLA and Students Supporting Israel UCLA would like to apologize...

...for absolutely nothing.

Members of UCLA student government (USAC) have once again shown they are anti-dialogue, anti-learning, anti-truth, anti-student, anti-Jewish and antisemitic in condemning our beautiful event last week with Omer Shem Tov, a young man kidnapped from a music festival and held, tortured, and treated inhumanely as a hostage and human slave by Hamas in Gaza for over 500 days.

Omer's story rang loudly and proudly on campus last week, as the world was observing Yom Hashoah- when we remind ourselves and our allies to never forget the 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust. How appropriate, then, that Omer was here to help remind UCLA of humanity in times of darkness.

This theme continues on campus this week as Hillel hosts programs and events for Israel's memorial day and Israel's 78th year of Independence. We look forward to meaningful and open conversations and exchanges with everyone on our campus who supports dialogue, democracy, learning and truth.

UCLA statement on recent campus event and USAC letter

April 22, 2026 Share

UCLA issued the following statement:

The event's message was one of resilience and respect for human rights and dignity — a message we support. We stand by UCLA Hillel, UCLA Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies and the UCLA Chapter of Students Supporting Israel's invitation to have this very important dialogue, which occurred on Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. We firmly stand against violence of any kind. Omer Shem Tov spoke with students and other members of the community with the Chancellor and Dr. Felicia Knaul in attendance, and the event occurred without any disruption. We will review the process by which this letter was issued. The condemnation of such a peaceful event to share a story of resilience in the face of extreme suffering is antithetical to the values of our Bruin community.

From the California Post: *The Undergraduate Students Association Council claimed hosting Hamas torture survivor Omer Shem Tov "obscured the broader reality of ongoing state violence." UCLA was quick to slam the group's comments and one member broke ranks to brand it "blatantly disrespectful" and revealed it was released without everyone present to vote on it. The council president also said he was not present when it was decided. The college's Hillel brought in the 23-year-old to discuss his harrowing 505 days in the tunnels under Gaza at the hands of the terrorists after he was snatched during the October 7 massacre. He spoke at an event to mark Holocaust Remembrance Day on April 14 — which was attended by chancellor Julio Frenk — and was widely celebrated by the university's Jewish students.*

...[Undergraduate Student Association Council] president Diego Bollo told The Post he was not present at the meeting, and that the councilmember who introduced the letter did so on a day when a councilmember who had promoted Omer's event was not present to share her perspective and knowledge of the event. Bollo also said the letter was passed by a "bare majority."

"I acknowledge that this reflects a lapse in oversight on my part as President, and I take responsibility for that institutional shortcoming. To address this issue, I am initiating a review immediately of our internal processes for drafting and releasing public statements," Bollo told The Post. "I deeply value free speech and free expression on our campus. I have worked throughout my term to ensure that the university supports all student groups in hosting speakers and a wide range of programming. Free speech is a principle I do not compromise on — regardless of the nature or subject of any given event," he added. ...Talia Davood, who is Jewish and on the council, said: "What left me particularly speechless was the decision to bring this forward on the night of Yom HaShoah — a day dedicated to mourning the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust... She added: "I want to recognize that not all officers present tonight were at the meeting last week. I also want to make it clear that my office condemns doxxing of any kind." ...

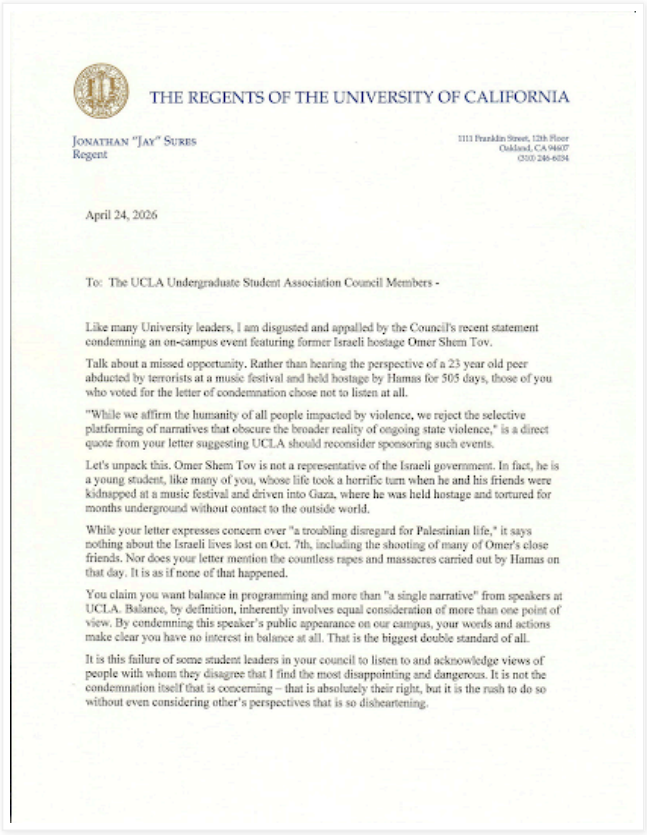
...UCLA released a statement following the student body's letter, saying: "The event's message was one of resilience and respect for human rights and dignity — a message we support. "We stand by UCLA Hillel, UCLA Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies and the UCLA chapter of Students Supporting Israel's invitation to have this very important dialogue, which occurred on Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. "We firmly stand against violence of any kind. Omer Shem Tov spoke with students and other members of the community with the chancellor and Dr. Felicia Knaul in attendance, and the event occurred without any disruption.

"We will review the process by which this letter was issued. The condemnation of such a peaceful event to share a story of resilience in the face of extreme suffering is antithetical to the values of our Bruin community." ...

Jewish students make up an estimated 9% of UCLA's undergraduate population, or roughly 3,100 to 4,000 students.

Full story at https://nypost.com/2026/04/22/us-news/ucla-students-protest-israeli-hostages-campus-visit/.

And there was one more letter yours truly found on the web:



THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

JONATHAN "JAY" SURES
Regent

1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 246-6034

April 24, 2026

To: The UCLA Undergraduate Student Association Council Members -

Like many University leaders, I am disgusted and appalled by the Council's recent statement condemning an on-campus event featuring former Israeli hostage Omer Shem Tov.

Talk about a missed opportunity. Rather than hearing the perspective of a 23 year old peer abducted by terrorists at a music festival and held hostage by Hamas for 505 days, those of you who voted for the letter of condemnation chose not to listen at all.

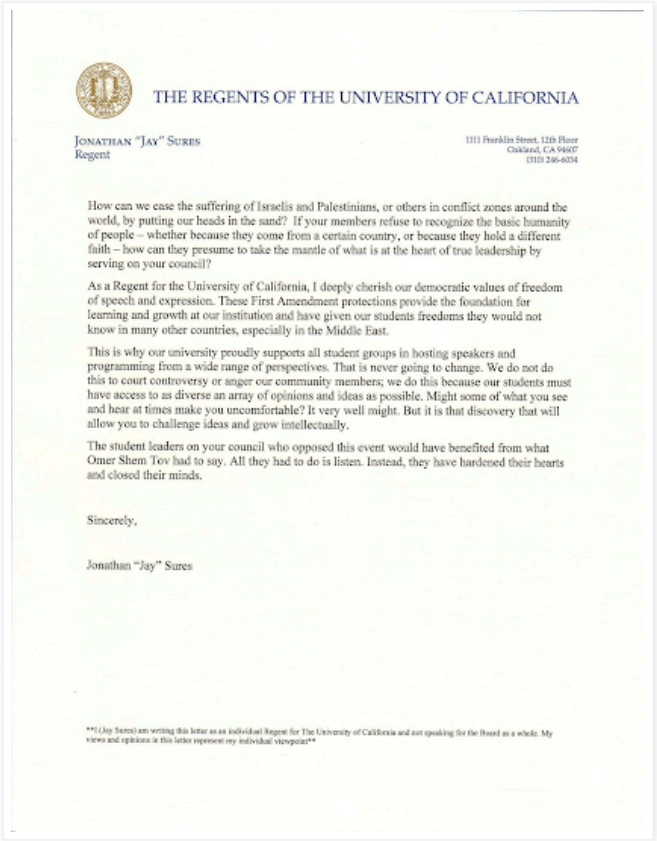
"While we affirm the humanity of all people impacted by violence, we reject the selective platforming of narratives that obscure the broader reality of ongoing state violence," is a direct quote from your letter suggesting UCLA should reconsider sponsoring such events.

Let's unpack this. Omer Shem Tov is not a representative of the Israeli government. In fact, he is a young student, like many of you, whose life took a horrific turn when he and his friends were kidnapped at a music festival and driven into Gaza, where he was held hostage and tortured for months underground without contact to the outside world.

While your letter expresses concern over "a troubling disregard for Palestinian life," it says nothing about the Israeli lives lost on Oct. 7th, including the shooting of many of Omer's close friends. Nor does your letter mention the countless rapes and massacres carried out by Hamas on that day. It is as if none of that happened.

You claim you want balance in programming and more than "a single narrative" from speakers at UCLA. Balance, by definition, inherently involves equal consideration of more than one point of view. By condemning this speaker's public appearance on our campus, your words and actions make clear you have no interest in balance at all. That is the biggest double standard of all.

It is this failure of some student leaders in your council to listen to and acknowledge views of people with whom they disagree that I find the most disappointing and dangerous. It is not the condemnation itself that is concerning – that is absolutely their right, but it is the rush to do so without even considering other's perspectives that is so disheartening.



THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

JONATHAN "JAY" SURES
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1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 246-6034

How can we ease the suffering of Israelis and Palestinians, or others in conflict zones around the world, by putting our heads in the sand? If your members refuse to recognize the basic humanity of people – whether because they come from a certain country, or because they hold a different faith – how can they presume to take the mantle of what is at the heart of true leadership by serving on your council?

As a Regent for the University of California, I deeply cherish our democratic values of freedom of speech and expression. These First Amendment protections provide the foundation for learning and growth at our institution and have given our students freedoms they would not know in many other countries, especially in the Middle East.

This is why our university proudly supports all student groups in hosting speakers and programming from a wide range of perspectives. That is never going to change. We do not do this to court controversy or anger our community members; we do this because our students must have access to as diverse an array of opinions and ideas as possible. Might some of what you see and hear at times make you uncomfortable? It very well might. But it is that discovery that will allow you to challenge ideas and grow intellectually.

The student leaders on your council who opposed this event would have benefited from what Omer Shem Tov had to say. All they had to do is listen. Instead, they have hardened their hearts and closed their minds.

Sincerely,

Jonathan "Jay" Sures

I (Jay Sures) am writing this letter as an individual Regent for The University of California and not speaking for the Board as a whole. My views and opinions in this letter represent my individual viewpoint

Source: https://x.com/yashar/status/2047737036568969352.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, diversity, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 324

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Department of Education released its third and final set of regulations related to the One Big Beautiful Bill Act for public comment... This proposal fleshes out a new accountability metric designed to test the return on investment of each degree program at more than 4,000 colleges and universities. (The previous two—for which public comment has already closed—outlined new graduate student loan caps and an expansion of the Pell Grant for short-term job training programs.) If the regulations are finalized, undergraduate programs would be required to show that their average graduate earns more than a working adult with only a high school degree. The same would be true for graduate programs, but students' earning would be compared to a bachelor's degree holder.*

Programs that fail the test for two out of three consecutive years would lose access to federal student loans, and in certain circumstances a program could eventually lose access to the Pell Grant as well...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/04/20/new-college-accountability-metric-published-public-comment.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 150

From the Harvard Crimson: *Members of the Harvard faculty subcommittee that drafted a proposal to cap A grades said Yale's recent recommendation of a 3.0 mean GPA would cut deeper into student transcripts than Harvard's own plan — even as they welcomed Yale's entry into a debate that has so far unfolded largely in Cambridge.*

The Yale Committee on Trust in Higher Education, in a report released April 10, urged Yale College to adopt "a 3.0 mean, or some other college-wide standard" to address grade inflation, alongside a new percentile-rank metric on transcripts. A Harvard committee proposed a different instrument: a 20 percent cap on A grades per course, with four additional As permitted, and no mandated distribution across other grades.

Government professor Alisha C. Holland, a member of the Harvard subcommittee, said the two proposals would land in very different places on student transcripts. "I would expect — especially in the short term, as instructors make adjustments – that the median grade at Harvard will be an A-minus," Holland said. "That is far off from the mean of a 3.0 that Yale is recommending." ...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/23/yale-report-harvard-reacts/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, Yale

Saturday, April 25, 2026

The Regents are Coming to UCLA May 5-6, 2026 (Tuesday-Wednesday)

Agenda: May 5-6, 2026 - Luskin Conference Center, UCLA

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Tuesday, May 5, 2026

10:00 am **Health Services Committee** (open session- includes public comment session)

Public Comment

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Upon end of open session:

Health Services Committee (closed session)

H1(X) Discussion: Strategic Planning, UCLA Health: Future Alignments and Acquisitions

H2(X) Discussion: Litigation Update: Evolving Risk in Reimbursement

H3(X) Discussion: UC Health Litigation Update

H4(X) Discussion: UC Irvine Health Acquisition Integration and Risk Review

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Upon end of closed session:

Health Services Committee (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 17, 2026

H5 Discussion: Review of the UC Health Division 2025-28 Strategic Plan and Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget

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1:00 pm **Board** (open session)

Remarks of the Chair of the Board

Remarks of the President of the University

Remarks of the Chair of the Academic Senate

B1 Discussion: UC Inspires: Leveraging the Power of UC Alumni

B2 Discussion: UCLA Bruins NCAA Champion Women's Basketball Team

--

2:45 pm **Governance Committee** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 18, 2026

G1(X) Discussion: Collective Bargaining Matters

NOTE: A potential AFSCME strike is scheduled for May 14.

G2(X) Discussion: Appointment of and Compensation for Laboratory Director, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

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Upon end of closed session:

Governance Committee (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 18, 2026

G2 Action: Approval of Appointment of and Compensation for Laboratory Director, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory as Discussed in Closed Session

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3:45 pm **Board** (open session)

Committee Report Including Approvals of Recommendations from Committees: Governance Committee

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4:00 pm **Investments Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 17, 2026

I1 Discussion: Review of Third Quarter 2025–26 Fiscal Year Performance for UC Retirement, Endowment, and Working Capital Assets

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Wednesday, May 6, 2026

8:30 am **Board** (open session - includes public comment session)

Public Comment Period (30 minutes)

Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings of November 19, 2025 and March 17 and 18, 2026

Remarks from Student Associations

B3 Discussion: UC Research Landscape and Impact

B4 Discussion: Balancing Environmental and Financial Sustainability Considerations to Build Next-Generation University Energy Systems

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10:15 am **Board** (closed session)

B5(X) Discussion: External Funding Litigation and Legal Issues

NOTE: This item refers to the current UC/UCLA conflict with the federal government. Normally, a special committee of the Board deals with this conflict between full Regents sessions. This discussion, in contrast, is with the full Board.

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11:15 am **Compliance and Audit Committee** (closed session)

C1(X) and C2(X) Review of various medical malpractice and other cases. *Included is a pre-lawsuit case involving UCLA and a software/hardware company, Oracle America (and likely refers to the failed Ascend 2.0 matter)*, and what are referred to as "Remote" cases (which may refer to requests for tuition refunds due to the COVID pandemic). Also included are private and federal cases involving antisemitism, cases related to protests, and *a case concerning UCLA's attempt to move out of the Rose Bowl*.

C3(X) Information: Settlements and Separation Agreements under Delegated Authority Reported from February 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026

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12:15 pm **Board** (closed session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 17-18, 2026

Committee Reports Including Approval of Recommendations from Committees:

- Compliance and Audit Committee

- Governance Committee

- Health Services Committee

Officers' and President's Reports:

- Personnel Matters

- Report of Interim Actions

- Report of Materials Mailed Between Meetings

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1:30 pm **Finance and Capital Strategies Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 18, 2026

Consent Agenda:

- F1A Action: Consent Item: Fiscal Year 2026-27 Bond Issuances

- F1B Action: Consent Item: Advanced Work Phase of the Mission Bay Education Center and Dental Clinics, San Francisco Campus: Construction Funding, Scope, and Design Following an Exemption Determination Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act

- F1C Action: Consent Item: Adoption of Expenditure Rate for the General Endowment Pool

- F1D Action: Consent Item: Adoption of Endowment Administration Cost Recovery Rate

F2 Action: Heller Student Housing South, Santa Cruz Campus: Budget, Scope, External Financing, and Design Following Consideration of an Addendum to the Student Housing West Environmental Impact Report Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act

F3 Action: Mission Bay Block 16A Building, San Francisco Campus: Budget and External Financing for UCSF's Contribution to the Project, Scope, Design Following Consideration of an Addendum to the UCSF Long Range Development Plan Environmental Impact Report Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, and Acceptance of Gift of Real Property

F4 Action: University of California Retirement Plan – Amendment to Previously Approved Action: Suspension of $550 Million Short Term Investment Pool Transfer In 2026–27

F5 Action: Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget for the University of California Office of the President

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3:00 pm **Academic and Student Affairs Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 18, 2026

A1 Discussion: UC Center Sacramento and UC Washington Center: Cultivating Future Leaders for the State and Nation

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3:30 pm **Public Engagement and Development Committee** (open session)

Action: Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 20–21, 2026

P1 Discussion: State Governmental Relations Update

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3:45 pm **Board** (open session)

Committee Reports Including Approvals of Recommendations from Committees:

- Academic and Student Affairs Committee

- Finance and Capital Strategies Committee

- Health Services Committee

- Investments Committee

- Public Engagement and Development Committee

Resolutions

Officers' and President's Reports

Report of Materials Mailed Between Meetings

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Source: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/meetings/agendas/may26.html

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:23 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, health care, UC Regents, UCLA

Panunzio Awards

The 2025-2026 Constantine Panunzio Distinguished Emeriti Award honoring Emeriti Professors in the University of California system has been awarded to Professor Emerita of Anthropology Monique Bogerhoff Mulder (UC Davis) and Professor Emeritus of Agricultural and Resource Economics Alain de Janvry (UC Berkeley).

UC Emeriti Professors Borgerhoff Mulder and de Janvry are the fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh recipients of the Constantine Panunzio Award. Both awardees have especially long and notable records of research, teaching, and service to the University of California, their disciplines, and their communities. The late Dr. Panunzio, a Professor of Sociology at UCLA for many years, has been described as the architect of the UC Retirement System and was particularly active in improving pensions and stipends for his fellow Emeriti. The award bearing his name was established in 1983 and includes a $5,000 prize. The Panunzio Award exemplifies the tremendous contributions of Emeriti to the continued excellence of the UC System.

> **Monique Borgerhoff Mulder, UC Davis**, Professor Emerita of Anthropology, retired in 2018. She has sustained an extraordinary level of scholarly productivity and leadership in the interdisciplinary fields of human behavioral ecology, conservation science, and sustainability studies. Her research continues to illuminate the intersections of poverty, inequality, and environmental conservation, particularly in East Africa, where she has conducted long-term collaborative fieldwork with pastoralist, fishing, and forest dependent communities. Professor Emerita Borgerhoff Mulder has secured multiple competitive research grants from the National Science Foundation, the UK Natural Environment Research Council, and the Global Challenges Research Fund. These awards, totaling several million dollars in research support, reflect the confidence of international funders in her methodological rigor and interdisciplinary vision. Elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2021, she continues to shape global scientific discourse through invited lectures, international workshops, and leadership roles in organizations such as the Cultural Evolution Society and the Santa Fe Institute. Her work also has substantial impact beyond academia. Through organizations she co-founded and advises, such as Watu Simba na Mazingira (WASIMA) and the Ngezi-Vumawimbi Heritage Organization, she has advanced community driven conservation efforts in Tanzania and Zanzibar, strengthening local governance and supporting sustainable livelihoods. Her editorial work has set field standards and amplifies emerging voices, broadening interdisciplinary dialogue, and accelerating community engaged research.
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> **Alain de Janvry, UC Berkeley**, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural & Resource Economics, retired in 2017. Professor Emeritus de Janvry has sustained a field defining presence in development economics, agricultural policy, poverty alleviation, and the political economy

of institutions. Through ongoing collaborations with scholars and international development organizations, he remains an influential voice in the global conversation on economic development, evidence-based policy, and risk management for vulnerable populations. Additionally, he has published landmark studies in the *American Economic Review* and *AEJ: Applied Economics* on bureaucratic incentives, disaster recovery, technology diffusion, and insurance adoption. His service on scientific councils has anchored rigorous, policy relevant editorial curation and broadened access for applied research communities worldwide. Professor Emeritus de Janvry's field experiments on subjective performance evaluations in China, index-based disaster funds in Mexico, and the diffusion of climate resilient rice varieties in India exemplify his rigorous empirical approach. He has shaped research agendas through major monographs on disaster risk finance, and impact evaluation methodologies. His experimental and quasi experimental studies, ranging from randomized farmer training interventions to regression discontinuity analyses of disaster funding, have directly influenced program designs across governments and NGOs. He remains a dedicated mentor, advising graduate students, junior faculty, as well as practitioners, and continues to advance the use of evidence in policy design and implementation.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

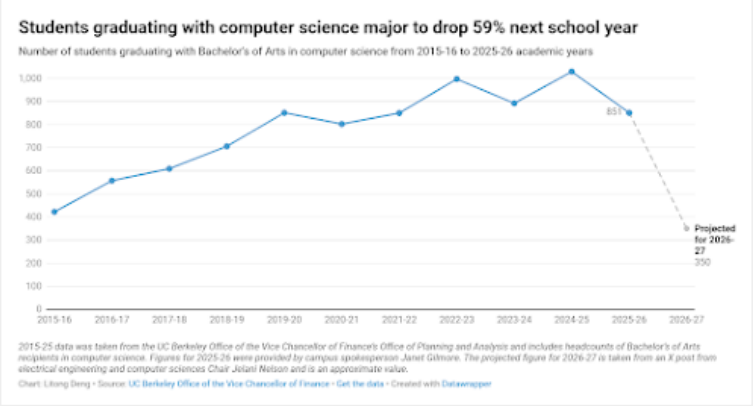
Labels: uc retirement, UC-Berkeley, UC-Davis

Straws in the Wind - Part 323

From the Daily Californian: *The number of computer science graduates at UC Berkeley is expected to decrease to 851 for the 2025-26 academic year, down from 1,029 graduates in 2024-25. According to electrical engineering and computer sciences chair Jelani Nelson, as of late March, the CS department is slated to graduate approximately 350 students in 2027. These figures represent a 59% decrease in CS enrollment from the 2025-26 to 2026-27 school years. The decline in campus computer science graduates mirrors a trend across the UC system, with CS major enrollment across the university decreasing in 2025 for the first time since the early 2000s. It also contributes to a larger nationwide decline in CS majors, with an 8.1% drop at four-year colleges in fall 2025.*

...Since the release of ChatGPT in 2022, employment for computer science and math majors aged 22 to 27 has fallen by 8%. However, campus spokesperson Janet Gilmore noted that student interest in CS-related majors is "still strong" despite the rise of AI. Gilmore cited rising instructional costs, campus budget constraints and faculty availability as contributing factors in the reduction in enrollment.

...In an X post, [Electrical engineering and computer sciences chair Jelani] Nelson identified the high cost of instruction as the primary cause of campus's decision to reduce CS major enrollment. Undergraduate teaching assistants now cost the department between $71.95 and $80.51 per hour. Since winning a grievance in January 2020, campus EECS and data science undergraduate TAs receive proportional tuition waivers depending on how many hours they work. According to Nelson's post, this change significantly increased department costs, which led campus to reduce undergraduate CS enrollment and decrease the number of undergraduate TAs...


Students graduating with computer science major to drop 59% next school year
Number of students graduating with Bachelor's of Arts in computer science from 2015-16 to 2025-26 academic years
1,000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
851
Projected for 2026-27
350
2015-16
2016-17
2017-18
2018-19
2019-20
2020-21
2021-22
2022-23
2023-24
2024-25
2025-26
2026-27
2015-25 data was taken from the UC Berkeley Office of the Vice Chancellor of Finance's Office of Planning and Analysis and includes headcounts of Bachelor's of Arts recipients in computer science. Figures for 2025-26 were provided by campus spokesperson Janet Gilmore. The projected figure for 2026-27 is taken from an X post from electrical engineering and computer sciences Chair Jelani Nelson and is an approximate value.
Chart: Litong Deng • Source: UC Berkeley Office of the Vice Chancellor of Finance • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/academics/uc-berkeley-cs-major-enrollment-on-pace-to-drop-by-59-as-part-of-nationwide/article_8ceded3c-d939-4f60-8aa4-110be003c4e3.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: UC-Berkeley

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 149

From the Harvard Crimson: *A Harvard Medical School working group on open inquiry found that students and faculty frequently self-censor on controversial topics and recommended a series of changes to strengthen classroom and laboratory discourse, according to a report released Tuesday. The 16-member group, chaired by former HMS Dean Jeffrey S. Flier, called on the school to host regular public forums modeling debate on controversial issues, expand a recently adopted non-attribution rule for classroom discussions, and develop explicit guidelines on the boundaries of student and faculty activism in clinical settings.*

...The institution's push to examine open inquiry followed sustained pressure from the White House last spring to curtail diversity, equity, and inclusion programming and what the administration called left-leaning political bias in higher education. But Flier said in an interview before the report's release that the effort was driven by concerns internal to HMS, not federal pressure. "There was an obvious need for internal reform, unrelated to the Trump administration," Flier said. "Some people will look at some of the things that are recommended and say, isn't that something similar to what is being demanded? Maybe that's true in a few instances, but that just is not a reason to deny the issues that we take up."

...Anonymous feedback indicated that students struggled to "disagree respectfully and understand other perspectives" and often hesitated to share views on controversial topics. Faculty reported similar reluctance, citing fear of offending colleagues or facing backlash. Flier described the findings as "major issues" for the school. Self-censorship was especially pronounced in required courses on medical ethics, health care policy, and social medicine — topics the report described as "politically and socially charged." Some students felt those courses presented contested topics without sufficient viewpoint diversity, while others felt there was too much.

...Recommendations include articulating informal "social compacts" to guide classroom and laboratory interactions and establishing awards recognizing affiliates who advance open inquiry. Some of the working group's recommendations are already underway at HMS. The school updated application essay prompts for its M.D. and master's programs in late 2025 to place greater emphasis on applicants' ability to engage across difference, and it has partnered with the outside organizations to train faculty, staff, and student leaders...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/22/hms-open-inquiry-findings/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Harvard

Friday, April 24, 2026

The deadline that wasn't

As blog readers will know, April 24 - today - was supposed to be the deadline for converting all instructional materials to meet disability access standards.* But the deadline has been postponed one year. From Inside Higher Ed:

Citing heavy administrative burdens for institutions, the government is giving colleges, universities and other public entities another year to comply with new federal accessibility guidelines designed to reduce the hurdles students with disabilities face in accessing increasingly complex information on web pages and mobile apps.

The Department of Justice "overestimated the capabilities (whether staffing or technology) of covered entities to comply with the rule in the time frames provided," the department wrote in an interim final rule published to the Federal Register [last] Monday. "This [interim final rule] will lead to greater predictability and certainty as covered entities work towards accessibility of their websites" and "greater accessibility for individuals with disabilities." ...

Though there are some exceptions for "archived" content, compliance with [the regulations meant] that every PDF file must be accessible to a screen reader, every video accompanied by captions and audio descriptions, every photograph coded with alternate text, and every sound clip paired with a transcript. All third-party platforms have to meet the guidelines, too...

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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/04/coming-april-24th-part-2.html; https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/12/coming-april-24th.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:35 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity

Caution Advised

There have been reports of phone calls that purport to be from Navitus, the company that manages drug costs for some of UC's health insurance plans.

If you get a call that indicates a problem with your prescriptions, the best thing to do is to avoid responding directly. The general number for Navitus for those covered by its plan is 844-268-9789. If you get a message on your voicemail, call that number - not the number that may have been indicated in the phone call message - and ask if there is really a problem.

If you answer the original call, do not provide any information to the caller. Call back at the 844 number above.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: email fraud, health care, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 322

From the Chronicle of Higher Education: *A state legislature says a new ban on "staging walkouts" at public universities will protect free speech by preventing protesters from disrupting campus speakers. But some faculty members and speech advocates believe it's inappropriate to prohibit what they see as a legitimate form of protest at public campuses. That, and they argue that a walkout is one of the most peaceful and least disruptive forms of protest. The Tennessee legislation, sent to Republican Gov. Bill Lee's desk Friday, is dubbed the Charlie Kirk Act — adding to a growing number of red states that are using the conservative activist's legacy to reform campus speech. Despite HB 1476's name association, Tennessee Rep. Gino Bulso, a Republican and the bill's sponsor, said it is nonpartisan in nature.*

The legislation directs public colleges to formally adopt certain elements of the University of Chicago's policy on free expression, including one stating that students and others "may not obstruct or otherwise interfere" with viewpoints they don't like. The Chicago Principles have been embraced by a number of colleges in the past dozen years. The bill then describes what it considers to be obstruction, including "staging walkouts" during an event or in the middle of an invited speaker's remarks. It defines walkouts as "considerable disruption or distraction or the need to pause the event for any period of time, however short." If a student or faculty member violates the walkout provision, they may be subject to disciplinary probation, followed by suspension and expulsion for subsequent violations, according to the legislation.

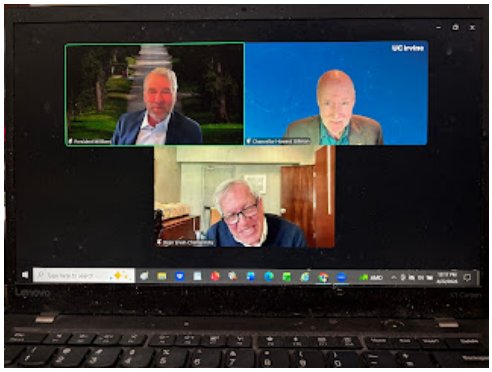
HB 1476 also prevents colleges from disinviting speakers due to their beliefs or in response to opposition from students or faculty...

Full story at https://www.chronicle.com/article/sit-and-stay-seated-walkouts-at-one-states-public-universities-could-soon-be-banned.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, politics, U of Chicago, U of Tennessee

Milliken-Gillman-Chermerinsky on Free Speech and Academic Freedom Issues



The UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement sponsored a webinar-conversation on free speech and academic freedom on April 22, featuring UC President Milliken, UC-Irvine Chancellor Howard Gillman, and Berkeley law school dean Erwin Chermerinsky. The three speakers were introduced by Center director Michelle Deutchman.

Below you can find an audio link to the program. The tendency was to focus on legal issues and the distinction between free speech and academic freedom. Yours truly would have preferred more emphasis on higher education values - not legal rights - of knowing what you are talking about before opining. But that's just me.

The one area of controversy that surfaced is the use of departmental political statements. Gillman indicated some reservation about where the Regents wound up on that issue, i.e., banning such statements if they appeared on the landing page of a department's website. He suggested that he would have gone further because such statements may impinge on the freedom of minority views. Milliken indicated that the issue might be revisited in the future. You can hear that exchange at the link below:

The entire one-hour event can be heard at:

https://ia801506.us.archive.org/0/items/newsom-03-04-2026/Milliken-Gillman-Chermerinsky%20free%20speech%204-22-2026.mp4. The excerpt above occurs around minute 27.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Milliken, UC Regents, UC-Berkeley, UC-Irvine

Thursday, April 23, 2026

PR Plus for UCLA's Use of VA Stadium

The California Post carries a story endorsing UCLA's continued use of the Jackie Robinson baseball stadium at the VA:

From the California Post: *From his wheelchair on the third-base side of UCLA's Jackie Robinson Stadium, Deavin Sessom looked out over the pristine grass field and tree-lined outfield that offered a glimpse of the Bel-Air hills in the distance. This is baseball heaven for the Vietnam veteran. "Every veteran that's had a chance to come out here and watch a ballgame," Sessom told the California Post, "I think it's one of the best things that's happened to us. It's my therapy."*

Sessom is among a slew of U.S. military veterans who attend every UCLA home baseball game because they enjoy the serenity and feel embraced by the team. But there's no guarantee they'll be able to keep coming back beyond this season. Last December, the U.S. 9th Court of Appeals upheld a ruling that would compel the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to build more than 2,500 units of housing on the West Los Angeles campus in which Jackie Robinson Stadium resides. Some of that housing was slated to be installed in the stadium parking lot.

While UCLA received a temporary reprieve to continue playing inside its longtime baseball home for the 2026 season, the future use of the stadium remains in doubt. "It's in the lawyers' hands now," Vietnam veteran Bill McGaughy said, "so it's like, what are you going to do?" McGaughy is among those who want the Bruins to stay put. He makes the short walk over to the stadium from his home on the VA campus several times a month during baseball season, saying he likes feeling part of a community...

Full story at https://nypost.com/2026/04/21/sports/us-veterans-want-ucla-to-stay-at-jackie-robinson-stadium/. (The California Post is a spinoff of the NY Post.)

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:35 AM No comments:

Labels: athletics, UCLA

Another 405 closure this weekend

Another lane closure is planned for the 405 in the Sepulveda Pass this coming weekend:

Northbound

- The interstate will be reduced to three lanes between Skirball Center Drive and Ventura Boulevard.
- The Skirball Center Drive on-ramp to the northbound 405 will be closed.

The southbound freeway will not be affected by the closure.

The lane closure runs from 10 PM Friday through 5 AM Monday.

Information from Patch:

https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/k7fwg/major-lane-closures-to-snarl-busy-la-county-freeway-this-weekend-what-to-know.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: traffic, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 321

From Inside Higher Ed: *A new law says Kentucky public college and university boards can lay off even tenured faculty for "bona fide financial reasons" including, but not limited to, low enrollment in a major or "misalignment of revenue and costs." The legislation requires 30 days' notice to the affected professor, giving them only a month to defend their job to board members... The Kentucky General Assembly finished passing House Bill 490 on April 1. Democratic governor Andy Beshear vetoed it April 13, writing in his official veto message that the legislation would let boards fire tenured faculty "for an ambiguous and vague new standard of 'bona fide financial reasons.'"*

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/04/17/kentucky-gop-overrides-beshears-veto-faculty-firing-bill.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, U of Kentucky

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 148

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard's graduate student union has begun its strike after the University failed to make "significant movement" before the midnight deadline, according to bargaining committee member Denish Jaswal. "The strike starts now," Jaswal said... Jaswal said the union's goal remains to secure a fair contract, calling the escalation "unfortunate" after more than a year of negotiations. "A strike is a way to make it known that the workers are willing to take action to fight for what they need in their workplaces," she said.*

She added that the union is prepared to end the strike if negotiations move forward. "We will very happily call off the strike," she said. "But until that point, we will remain on strike indefinitely." ...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/thread/2026/4/21/hgsu-strike-2026/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, strikes

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

News: Possible Mid-May UC Strike

From the Sacramento Bee: *A union representing University of California service and health care workers plans to launch an open-ended strike next month over allegations that the university had illegally increased members' insurance costs and refused to bargain over housing benefits. The union said the open-ended strike, scheduled to begin **May 14**, would be the first of its kind at UC health systems and would impact all 10 university campuses and other facilities across the state. "Instead of the university really bargaining in good faith, they illegally have imposed these terms that amount to pay cuts," Michael Avant, president of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299, said in an interview.*

AFSCME Local 3299's last contract with UC expired in July 2024. Negotiations have continued on and off in the two years since bargaining began. In November 2024, AFSCME Local 3299 went on a multi-day strike over low wages and health care costs. The union represents roughly 40,000 UC service and patient care technical workers who work at university facilities across the state... UC Health cares for 2.5 million patients each year and serves Californians in 99% of the state's ZIP codes.

Heather Hansen, a spokesperson for UC's Office of the President, said in a statement that the university was disappointed at the union's strike announcement. "Given the progress at the table, an open-ended strike is unnecessary and risks disruption for patients, students, and campus operations," Hansen said...

Full story at https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article315419872.html.

Note that the Regents will be meeting May 5-6 at UCLA, i.e., before the May 14th deadline. So, if there is no settlement by then, there will likely be much said about this matter during public comments.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, strikes, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 320

From Inside Higher Ed: *Susan McMahon, an educator, author and podcaster, will no longer be Utah Valley University's commencement speaker, following backlash over her social media posts about Charlie Kirk's death... After Kirk was fatally shot while speaking on UVU's campus last year, McMahon made a post that has since been deleted listing quotes from Kirk, with the caption, "These aren't sound bites taken out of context. Millions of people feel they were*

harmed, and the murder that was horrific and should never have happened does not magically erase what was said or done."

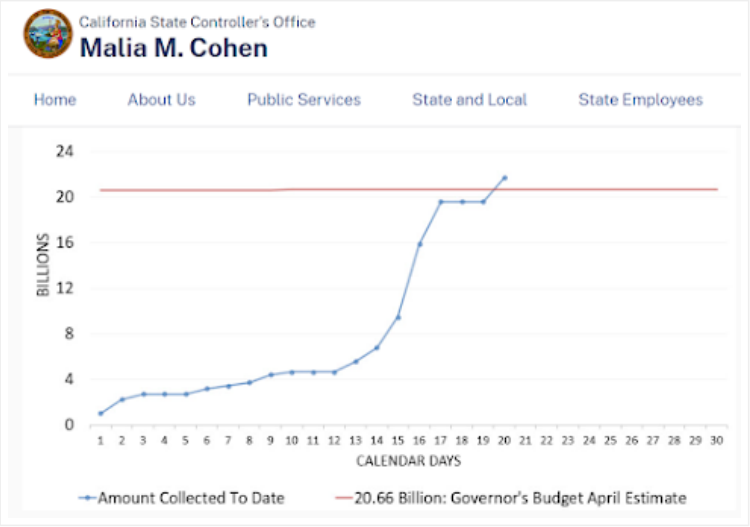
When UVU announced last week that McMahon would be this year's commencement speaker, university president Astrid Tuminez called her "a force of nature and a force for good..." But backlash came swiftly. The president of UVU's Turning Point USA chapter criticized the decision to host McMahon as "tone-deaf and disrespectful to those still affected" by Kirk's assassination... The university announced in a press release Thursday that McMahon would no longer speak at graduation due to safety concerns...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/04/17/commencement-speaker-who-criticized-charlie-kirk-out-uvu.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, politics, Utah Valley University

Already Ahead



April is the big income tax month and a lot of people pay up at the April 15 deadline. As the chart above shows, although the month is not complete, we are already ahead of the governor's projection - made at the time the January budget proposal was made - for April income tax receipts. We are also not far from the point when the governor will be submitting his May Revise budget. The continued above-projection figures for tax receipts will likely influence that submission and how the legislature looks at it.

The daily budget tracker for April is at https://sco.ca.gov/2026_personal_income_tax_tracker.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:15 AM No comments:

Labels: controller, governor, legislature, politics, State Budget

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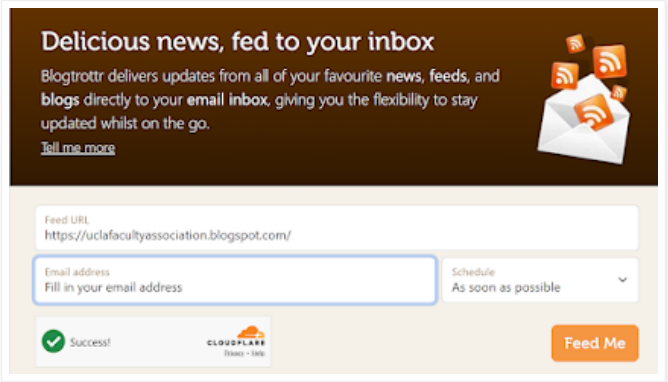
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Note and full disclosure: There are ads on these notifications.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 147

From the Harvard Crimson: *A group of faculty members is pressing Harvard's top brass to overhaul how it investigates professors, raising concerns that current procedures lack basic safeguards and could expose faculty to unfair or overly opaque disciplinary processes. The effort, led by a working group within the Council on Academic Freedom at Harvard, has gained momentum in recent months as faculty examine investigations that have unfolded across the University...*

"We are concerned that some investigations have failed to adhere to reasonable standards of due process and that this threatens academic freedom," University Professor Eric S. Maskin, a co-president of CAFH, wrote in a statement...

Last fall, the University launched a probe into former University President Lawrence H. Summers, just months before his dramatic resignation. And mathematics professor Martin Nowak was placed on paid administrative leave by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' Faculty Conduct Committee pending a formal investigation. (The FCC is a two-year pilot committee that reviews professional conduct concerns that do not fall under Non-Discrimination and Anti-Bullying procedures). The University has also conducted several less public — but also scrutinized — internal investigations into Harvard faculty in recent years, including Anthropology professor John L. Comaroff, Economics professor Roland G. Fryer, Jr., Geology professor Daniel P. Schrag, and HKS Lecturer Marshall L. Ganz '64...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/17/cafh-faculty-investigations/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:05 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Harvard's Budget Leak

Since we have been blogging about UCLA budget matters on and off (including yesterday), it might be of interest to look at another university's budget.

Harvard operates on a more decentralized basis than UCLA. And it doesn't have its own hospital (although it has a med school). Apparently, for years, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) has released aggregate budgets: Income statements (Revenues, Expenditures) and balance sheet (assets and liabilities). But after FY 2025 had passed, it didn't make a public release of its financial report. Nonetheless, it provided the FY 2025 report to selected individuals, one or more of which leaked it to the Harvard Crimson. The Harvard Crimson then published the report.* You can find the report at:

https://ia903207.us.archive.org/35/items/ucla-budget-book-v-final-feb-2026/Harvard%20Faculty%20of%20Arts%20and%20Sciences%20financial%20report%20FY2025.pdf

The income statement in the report shows a deficit for FY 2025 of $7.7 million. How bad is that? Expenditures were about $1.8 billion so the deficit was 0.4% of spending. How much did FAS have in the bank (liquid assets) to cover the deficit? The balance sheet in the report says there are "deposits with the university" of around $2 billion. So presumably, nobody is panicking. Why there was an attempt to keep the report semi-secret is an interesting question.

UCLA needs at a minimum to turn out reports such as Harvard's on a reasonably timely basis. Yes, it is more complicated at UCLA because of the health enterprise, as we noted yesterday. But it isn't impossible.

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*https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/13/fas-unpublished-annual-report/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, health care, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 319

From the Yale Daily News: *The English department has nearly halved the number of sections of an introductory writing course, from 32 last fall to 17 this fall, as budget cuts constrain academic offerings at Yale. In addition to that decrease in the fall sections of English 1014, "Writing Seminars," the number for English 1020, "Reading and Writing the Modern Essay," has dropped from 17 to 14. The reductions are among the latest impacts on undergraduate academics of budget pressure in anticipation of an upcoming endowment tax hike. They come on top of decisions not to renew the contracts of several instructional faculty members, which the Faculty of Arts and Sciences dean described as being affected by budget "trade-offs."*

"These reductions were imposed upon us by the FAS Teaching Resource Advisory Committee, which has also imposed an increase in class size," Feisal Mohamed, the English department's

director of undergraduate studies, wrote in an email to the News. "As a department, we are deeply concerned that the incoming class will not be able to find seats in introductory writing courses, and that those who do will receive less individualized attention." ...

Full story at https://yaledailynews.com/articles/fewer-english-writing-sections-are-being-offered-due-to-budget-cuts.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Yale

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 146

From the Harvard Crimson: *The Harvard College Dean of Students Office is investigating a formal complaint against the Harvard Republican Club over potential violations of the College's harassment and photography policies. College spokesperson Jonathan Palumbo confirmed in a Tuesday statement that the complaint had been referred to the DSO's Student Engagement team, which handles cases of alleged misconduct by registered student organizations.*

The complaint stems from a controversial April 4 post to the club's official X account criticizing the Harvard Islamic Society's Eid al-Fitr celebration in the courtyard of Quincy House. The post, which remains pinned at the top of the HRC's page, included photographs and video taken at the event. It alleged that "Harvard's historic Quincy Courtyard had been turned into a bazaar selling Hijabs, Burqas and Qurans," that "large prayer mats covered the grass," and that the event attracted "dozens of unvetted strangers who roamed outside student dorms." It also claimed that speakers "blasted Islamic music."

"Harvard has been captured," it stated...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/4/15/hrc-complaint-investigation/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, diversity, Harvard